

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 SIG-03
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TO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA IMMEDIATE

USINT HAVANA

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SANA

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AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

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E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS:ET, US, SU, CU, MOPS

SUBJECT:STATEMENTS FEBRUARY 24 BY THE SECRETARY AND DR. BREZEZINSKI ON SOVIET AND CUBAN MILITARY ROLE IN ETHIOPIA

1. FOLLOWING IS PRESS GUIDANCE PREPARED ON SUBJECT:

Q. YESTERDAY THE SECRETARY SAID THAT THERE WERE 8,000 TO 10,000 CUBAN TROOPS IN ETHIOPIA WHILE DR. BREZEZINSKI SAID THERE WERE BETWEEN 10,000 AND 11,000. HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THIS DIFFERENCE AND WHO WAS RIGHT?

A. THE FIGURES GIVEN, WHICH OF COURSE ARE ESTIMATES ARE WITHIN A CLOSE RANGE. INFORMATION ABOUT ARRIVALS COME TO US DAILY, OFTEN SEVERAL TIMES DURING THE DAY. CLEARLY, THE POINT WE ARE BOTH MAKING IS THERE HAS BEEN A SIGNIFICANT AND RAPID BUILD-UP IN THE NUMBER OF CUBAN COMBAT TROOPS IN ETHIOPIA IN THE RANGES MENTIONED BY BOTH THE SECRETARY AND DR. BREZEZINSKI.

Q. WAS DR. BREZEZINSKI ACCURATE IN SAYING THAT SOVIET GENERAL PETROV IS IN COMMAND IN THE HARAR SECTOR?

A. WE CAN CONFIRM THAT REPORTS INDICATE THAT A GENERAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PETROV IS IN FACT, AS DR. BREZEZINSKI SAID, PROVIDING DIRECTION TO THE MILITARY OPERATIONS IN THE HARAR AREA. AS DR. BREZEZINSKI ADDED, SUCH AN OPERATIONAL ROLE FOR A SOVIET OFFICER IN A THIRD WORLD CONFLICT IS UNUSUAL.

Q. WILL IT NOT BE DAMAGING TO OUR RELATIONS WITH ETHIOPIA, SO RECENTLY SET ON THE ROAD TO IMPROVEMENT BY THE MISSION OF DAVID AARON, TO HAVE HIS BOSS MAKE SUCH PUBLIC STATEMENTS?

A. THE MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE AARON MISSION WAS TO RE-ESTABLISH A DIALOGUE WITH THE ETHIOPIAN LEADERSHIP ON A BASIS OF FRANKNESS AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING. THE ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT IS QUITE AWARE OF OUR POSITION WITH RESPECT TO SOVIET AND CUBAN FORCES IN ETHIOPIA INCLUDING THE VIEWS RECENTLY EXPRESSED BY BOTH THE SECRETARY AND DR. BREZEZINSKI. VANCE

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